

Signage to Educate the Public and Prevent the Spread of Aquatic Invasive Species at a Boat Launch in the
Huron-Manistee National Forest, Michigan

October 2012

HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INVASIVE SPECIES

Before launching and before leaving:

- ✓ **INSPECT** boats, trailers, and equipment.
- ✓ **REMOVE** all aquatic plants, animals, and mud.
- ✓ **DRAIN** water from boat, motor, live well, and equipment.
- ✓ **NEVER MOVE** plants or live animals from one water-body to another.
- ✓ **DO NOT** release worms or unused bait.

Inspect everything!

It is illegal to launch with aquatic plants attached to boat or trailer (MI Public Act 91 of 2008).

Look Out for these Harmful Species

The mat-forming Eurasian water-milfoil spreads by fragments that can be transported on boats and trailers. Look for leaves with 1/2 or more leaflet pairs.

Rusty crayfish destroy weed beds, fish habitat, and native crayfish populations. Look for dark, rust-colored patches on the shell.

Curly-leaf pondweed forms dense mats in the spring. Look for stiff, curled leaves with small "teeth" around their edges.

Small zebra and quagga mussels are filter feeders, consuming plankton that young fish need. Surfaces such as boats and docks may be covered by their sharp shells.

The fish disease viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) kills muskies, walleye, whitefish, yellow perch, and others. Disinfect the hull and live wells of boats used on the Great Lakes with a solution of 1/2 cup chlorine bleach per 5 gallons of water.

Spiny and fishhook waterflea are tiny (< 1/2 inch) crustaceans that compete with small fish for food and collect in masses, fouling fishing lines and equipment.

Questions? Contact the Huron-Manistee National Forest at (231) 723-2211 or 775-5023

USDA Forest Service RESTORATION